



United States  
Office of Personnel Management

# **General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide**

**April 1998**

**Workforce Compensation and Performance Service  
Classification Programs Division  
June 1998, HRCD-5**

# General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide

## CONTENTS

PART I - GENERAL SCHEDULE WORK LEADER POSITIONS .....	3
COVERAGE OF PART I .....	3
EXCLUSIONS .....	4
NOTE TO USERS .....	4
GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION .....	5
TITLING INSTRUCTIONS .....	6
SERIES DETERMINATION .....	6
PART II - GENERAL SCHEDULE TEAM LEADER POSITIONS .....	7
COVERAGE OF PART II .....	7
EXCLUSIONS .....	7
NOTE TO USERS .....	8
Background .....	8
Relationship to Bargaining Unit Status of Team Leader Positions .....	8
Position Management .....	9
OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION .....	9
Functions of Team Leaders .....	9
Differences Between Team Leaders and Supervisors .....	11
GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION .....	12
Base Level of Work Led .....	13
TITLING INSTRUCTIONS .....	14
SERIES DETERMINATION .....	14

## **PART I - GENERAL SCHEDULE WORK LEADER POSITIONS**

### **GUIDANCE FOR CLASSIFICATION OF ONE-GRADE INTERVAL GENERAL SCHEDULE WORK LEADER POSITIONS**

#### **COVERAGE OF PART I**

Part I of this guide is used to classify positions of work leaders who, as a regular and recurring part of their assignment, lead three or more employees in clerical or other one-grade interval occupations in the General Schedule in accomplishing work. Work leaders also perform work that is usually of the same kind and level as that done by the team led.

Part I of this guide supersedes the Work Leader Grade Evaluation Guide issued in January 1976.

Leaders are responsible to their supervisors for ensuring that the work assignments of the other employees of the team are carried out by performing a range of duties such as:

1. Distribute and balance the workload among employees in accordance with established work flow or job specialization, assure timely accomplishment of the assigned workload, and assure that each employee has enough work to keep busy;
2. Keep in touch with the status and progress of work, and make day- to- day adjustments in accordance with established priorities, obtaining assistance from the supervisor on problems that may arise, such as backlogs which cannot be disposed of promptly;
3. Estimate and report on expected time of completion of work, and maintain records of work accomplishments and time expended and prepare production reports as requested;
4. Instruct employees in specific tasks and job techniques and make available written instructions, reference materials and supplies;
5. Give on the job training to new employees in accordance with established procedures and practices;
6. Maintain a current knowledge and answer questions of other employees on procedures, policies, directives, etc. and obtain needed information or decisions from supervisor on problems that come up;
7. Check on work in progress or spot check work not requiring review (e. g., filing or direct services) and review completed work to see that supervisor's instruction on work sequence, procedures, methods and deadlines have been met;
8. Amend or reject work not meeting established standards, refer to supervisor questions or matters not covered by standards and problems in meeting performance standards;

9. Monitor working conditions such as seating, ventilation, lighting, safety, etc.;
10. Approve leave for a few hours or for emergencies;
11. Inform employees of available services and employee activities;
12. Resolve simple, informal complaints of employees and refer others to supervisor;
13. Report to supervisor on performance, progress and training needs of employees, and on behavior problems; and
14. Provide information to supervisor as requested concerning promotions, reassignment, recognition of outstanding performance, and personnel needs.

## EXCLUSIONS

Part I of this guide should not be used for positions of:

1. Employees who are accountable as supervisors for planning, scheduling, and directing work operations, administering supervisory personnel functions, evaluating work performance, and taking necessary action to assure that the work of subordinate employees meets standards of quantity and quality. (See [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#), the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#), and [Part II](#) of this guide.)
2. Employees who have "project" responsibility but do not lead other workers. In some work situations, employees are responsible for projects where some of the work needed to complete the projects is done ("farmed-out") by other employees. Where the other employees do such work under the immediate direction of their regular supervisors, the position of the employee with "project" responsibility is considered to be nonsupervisory in nature.
3. Employees who are responsible for work assignments requiring only one or two other workers. The positions of such employees have as their primary responsibility personal work accomplishment. Responsibility for work assignments involving one or two other persons is not sufficient to warrant being classified as a leader. Such positions are classified under appropriate nonsupervisory classification standards.
4. Employees who lead two-grade interval work or work accomplished by GS-09 or higher one-grade interval positions. Such positions are to be classified through application of grade level criteria in [Part II](#) of this Guide.

## NOTE TO USERS

It is the nature of responsibility for the work of others, rather than the number of employees involved, that distinguishes between leader and supervisory jobs. However, where the number of

workers is more than 12, the position should be carefully reviewed to determine whether it is really that of a leader rather than that of a supervisor, and therefore covered by this guide for leaders of clerical and other one-grade interval occupations.

## GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION

Under Part I of this guide, leader positions are classified one GS grade above the highest level of nonsupervisory work led.

Neither the number of workers led nor the variety of occupations in which they perform work impact the grade of a leader position. Because of the limited nature of leader responsibility, these factors do not significantly affect the difficulty and responsibility involved in performing the duties of a leader. Thus, where the employees in the team perform work in a variety of occupations, an extra grade should not be added because of that variety to the level of nonsupervisory work used in classifying the leader position.

In determining the base level of work led, the grade to be used usually is the grade of the highest level employee in the team (other than the leader or a supervisor). However, care should be taken to assure that this grade reflects the level of the nonsupervisory work actually led.

For example:

- a. The grades of employees assigned to a work team may reflect the level of their other work assignments rather than the work they do when they serve as members of the work team.
- b. The highest level employee assigned to the team may do work in an occupation in which the leader is not fully qualified. The level of such work should be used to grade the leader job only where the leader, although not fully qualified, has enough knowledge of the occupation to lead the work involved (for example, pass on instructions from the supervisor, explain work methods, check work, and report to the supervisor on work status or causes of work delays).
- c. The highest level employee, although assigned to the team, may receive little or no leadership from the leader in performing his work (for example, where the employee is an "expert" in the work, or performs above the normal full performance level of the occupation). In this case, the grade of the highest level employee does not reflect the level of the nonsupervisory work actually led, and should not be used as the base level.

Thus, in classifying one-grade interval leader jobs, consider only work where the leader performs substantially the full range of leader duties described under [Coverage of Part I](#).

Where the nonsupervisory work personally done by a leader is at a higher grade than the work done by the employees led, the nonsupervisory work and the leader duties are graded separately. The final grade of such a position is then determined by selecting the leader grade level or the nonsupervisory grade level, whichever is higher. (Note: Where the final grade of such a position is

based on its nonsupervisory work, the position is titled and classified as a nonsupervisory position, not as a leader.)

## **TITLING INSTRUCTIONS**

Positions covered by Part I of this guide are identified by prefixing the word "*Lead*" to the title of the position in which the leader is qualified and which reflects the work being performed by those led: for example -

LEAD SUPPLY CLERK

LEAD VOUCHER EXAMINER

LEAD MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN

## **SERIES DETERMINATION**

This guide is not intended to affect current practice regarding series classification. Positions classified as to grade by means of this guide will continue to be classified to the most appropriate classification series in accordance with definitions published in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) [Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families](#) and amplifying material in individual OPM position classification standards and guides.

## **PART II - GENERAL SCHEDULE TEAM LEADER POSITIONS**

### **GUIDANCE FOR CLASSIFICATION OF TWO-GRADE INTERVAL GENERAL SCHEDULE TEAM LEADER POSITIONS**

#### **COVERAGE OF PART II**

Part II of this guide is used to classify positions whose primary purpose is, as a regular and recurring part of their assignment and at least 25% of their duty time, to lead a team of other General Schedule (GS) employees in accomplishing two-grade interval work that meets at least the minimum requirements of Part II. Team leaders usually also participate in the work of the team by performing work that is of the same kind and level as the highest level of work accomplished by the team led.

Team leaders work with team members to achieve specific tasks, produce work products and services and meet program and production goals. Typically, a team leader assists the team through knowledge and application of leadership and team building skills and techniques such as group facilitation, coordination, coaching, problem solving, interpersonal communication, integration of work processes and products, obtaining resources and liaison with the supervisor. Team leaders covered by this guide are also accountable for outcomes and results, e.g., timely delivery of quality work products and services produced by the team led.

#### **EXCLUSIONS**

The distinction between team leader positions and types of positions that involve other forms of leadership may not always be clear. Users are urged to consider all available information in making a decision. This guide does not apply to:

1. Positions that fully meet [Factor Level 3-2 in the General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) (GSSG). This includes positions and employees who are accountable as supervisors for planning, scheduling, and directing work operations, administering supervisory personnel functions, evaluating work performance, and taking necessary action to assure that the work of subordinate employees meets standards of quantity and quality.
2. Positions which lead other employees in performing work for which a base level cannot be determined. In some cross-functional project or matrix teams there may be no correlation between the type and/or grade level of work done by team members and the grade levels and/or occupational series of their permanent positions; consequently, it may not be feasible or practical to determine the base level of work performed. An example might be a team composed of employees ranging in grade/rank from WG-2 and GS-5 to GS-14 and SES, representing different field offices, which meets for the express purpose of developing a consolidated, organization-wide strategic plan.

3. Positions that have functional “project” responsibility but do not lead other workers on a continuing basis and/or personally perform work at a higher level than the work led. Such jobs should be evaluated by comparison with criteria in appropriate Factor Evaluation System (FES) or narrative classification standards that contain criteria for project or program management work (e.g., the [Administrative Analysis Grade-Evaluation Guide](#) or the Grade Level [Guide For Test and Evaluation Work in Engineering and Science Occupations](#)).

## NOTE TO USERS

### *Background*

Part II was developed to support the implementation of delayering, streamlining and right-sizing initiatives. It fills a gap in the classification coverage of two-grade interval team leader positions. Information about work covered in the guide was gathered by reviewing current human resources management literature, conducting fact finding involving sampling representative positions in agency headquarters organizations and field installations, identifying issues and concerns expressed by managers and personnelists, and analyzing comments and suggestions from agencies. The resulting classification criteria were developed with the assistance of agency experts to meet the needs of agency managers and personnelists in classifying a broad continuum of new leadership positions across government.

In addition to grade level criteria, Part II includes:

- occupational information about the work of team leaders;
- minimum requirements for coverage;
- examples of exclusions; and
- instructions for titling covered positions

### *Relationship to Bargaining Unit Status of Team Leader Positions*

Due to important and significant differences between the position classification and labor relations definitions of “supervisor,” this guidance should not be used to determine the bargaining unit status of team leader positions. There is a wide range of duties and responsibilities associated with team leadership, some of which may overlap typical supervisory functions. The bargaining unit status (BUS) of each position, i.e., the determination as to whether or not a particular position is included or excluded must be made separately through reference to labor relations criteria, not position classification standards. For additional information on determining the BUS of team leader positions classified using this guide, the user is referred to guidance and definitions in Title 5 United States Code, Part III, Subpart F, Chapter 71.



### *Position Management*

First and foremost, assignment of work and establishment of positions are agency management prerogatives, not classification issues. This team leader classification guidance provides a means of recognizing and crediting the performance of a distinctly different type of leadership work, but this guidance should not be interpreted as encouraging or discouraging the establishment of such positions wherever and whenever management decides they are necessary to further work accomplishment. The need for, size of the team, and number and type of team leader positions established should be based upon sound position management considerations, such as the reporting supervisor's span of control, the type of work led and the costs and benefits of the resulting structure relative to providing customer service and meeting organizational requirements.

More specifically, managers are responsible for designing organizations and structuring positions and functions in a manner that optimizes efficiency, economy, productivity, and organizational effectiveness. Sound position management, in addition to the above considerations, also requires a careful analysis of the level of independence of the positions led. For example, positions at the full performance level in any given organization may operate with fairly significant freedom from supervision. Positions of this type generally need little or no guidance on such matters as selecting appropriate problem-solving methods and techniques, or locating the appropriate regulations. Consequently, the decision to establish team leader positions warrants careful consideration of all applicable position management factors, including potential impact on supervisory positions.

For additional guidance on position management, the user is referred to the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, [Section III. Principles and Policies of Position Classification](#).

## **OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION**

### *Functions of Team Leaders*

Team Leaders are responsible to their supervisors or managers for assuring that the work of their assigned team is carried out by performing a range of coordinating and supportive duties and responsibilities. Team Leaders utilize a variety of coordinating, coaching, facilitating, consensus-building and planning techniques. These kinds of work methods and knowledges, skills and abilities (KSAs) are alternatives to traditional supervision which enable the team as a whole to deliver improved quality, quantity and timely services and/or work products to their customers.

To be classified by application of Part II, positions must exercise the minimum authorities and responsibilities required for coverage. At a minimum, Team Leaders perform all of the first seven (7) coaching, facilitating and mentoring duties and a total of fourteen (14) of the twenty (20) duties listed below:

1. Ensure that the organization's strategic plan, mission, vision and values are communicated to the team and integrated into the team's strategies, goals, objectives, work plans and work products and services;
2. Articulate and communicate to the team the assignment, project, problem to be solved, actionable events, milestones, and/or program issues under review, and deadlines and time frames for completion;
3. Coach the team in the selection and application of appropriate problem solving methods and techniques, provide advice on work methods, practices and procedures, and assist the team and/or individual members in identifying the parameters of a viable solution;
4. Lead the team in: identifying, distributing and balancing workload and tasks among employees in accordance with established work flow, skill level and/or occupational specialization; making adjustments to accomplish the workload in accordance with established priorities to ensure timely accomplishment of assigned team tasks; and ensuring that each employee has an integral role in developing the final team product;
5. Train or arrange for the training of team members in methods and techniques of team building and working in teams to accomplish tasks or projects, and provide or arrange for specific administrative or technical training necessary for accomplishment of individual and team tasks;
6. Monitor and report on the status and progress of work, checking on work in progress and reviewing completed work to see that the supervisor's instructions on work priorities, methods, deadlines and quality have been met;
7. Serve as coach, facilitator and/or negotiator in coordinating team initiatives and in consensus building activities among team members;
8. Maintain program and administrative reference materials, project files and relevant background documents and make available policies, procedures and written instructions from the supervisor; maintain current knowledge to answer questions from team members on procedures, policies, directives, etc.;
9. Prepare reports and maintain records of work accomplishments and administrative information, as required, and coordinate the preparation, presentation and communication of work-related information to the supervisor;
10. Represent the team in dealings with the supervisor or manager for the purpose of obtaining resources (e.g., computer hardware and software, use of overtime or compensatory time), and securing needed information or decisions from the supervisor on major work problems and issues that arise;

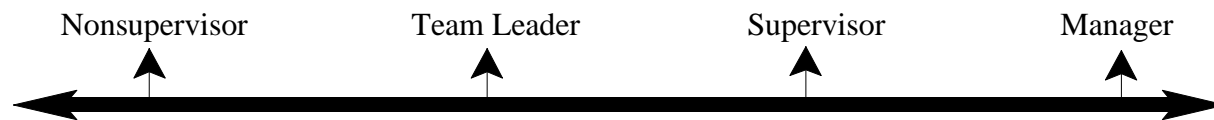
11. Report to the supervisor periodically on team and individual work accomplishments, problems, progress in mastering tasks and work processes, and individual and team training needs;
12. Represent the team consensus and convey the team's findings and recommendations in meetings and dealings with other team leaders, program officials, the public and other customers on issues related to or that have an impact on the team's objectives, work products and/or tasks;
13. Estimate and report to the team on progress in meeting established milestones and deadlines for completion of assignments, projects and tasks, and ensure that all team members are aware of and participate in planning for achievement of team goals and objectives;
14. Research, learn and apply a wide range of qualitative and/or quantitative methods to identify, assess, analyze and improve team effectiveness, efficiency and work products;
15. Lead the team in assessing its strengths and weaknesses and provide leadership to the team in exploring alternatives and determining what improvements can be made (e.g., in work methods, processes and procedures);
16. Approve emergency leave for up to three days; eight hours or less for medical appointments; and/or other types of leave as delegated by management;
17. Resolve simple, informal complaints of employees and refer others, such as formal grievances and appeals, to the supervisor or an appropriate management official;
18. Communicate team consensus and recommendations to the supervisor on actions affecting team and individual awards, rewards and recognition;
19. Inform employees of available employee benefits, services and work related activities;
20. Intercede with the supervisor on behalf of the team to inform the supervisor of performance management issues/problems and to recommend/request related actions, such as: assignments, reassignments, promotions, tour of duty changes, peer reviews and performance appraisals.

### *Differences Between Team Leaders and Supervisors*

For a position to be classified as supervisory and evaluated under the GSSG, the requisite supervisory and related managerial responsibilities involve the accomplishment of work through combined technical and administrative direction of others, and must constitute a major duty occupying at least 25% of the supervisor's time. Supervisory work, at a minimum, includes responsibility for: planning and scheduling work; assigning work to employees; accepting, amending or rejecting completed work; assuring that production and accuracy requirements are met; appraising performance and recommending performance standards and ratings; approving

leave; and effecting minor disciplinary measures. Additionally, the duties of a supervisor typically include prioritizing and scheduling work, and finding ways to improve the quality and/or quantity of the work directed.

Leadership and supervision may be thought of as points along a continuum from nonsupervisory to managerial work. The range of duties a team leader may be assigned is very flexible, i.e., duties may be just sufficient to meet the minimum for coverage to almost sufficient to warrant a supervisory classification.



For quick reference, the chart below lists examples of some of the more significant differences between team leaders and supervisors. These examples are not intended to be all-inclusive:

<b>TEAM LEADERS:</b>	<b>SUPERVISORS:</b>
Explain team goals and objectives to assigned team members and assist team in organizing to accomplish work	Set team goals, select team leaders, assign team members and administratively and technically direct the work of subordinates
Coach, facilitate, solve work problems and participate in the work of the team	Plan, assign, review and accept, amend or reject work done by teams and subordinates
Provide information to the supervisor on performance of the team and individuals	Assign performance ratings, approve awards and take performance-based corrective actions
Communicate assignments, milestones and deadlines to the team and individuals based on supervisor's instructions	Make work assignments, set or negotiate deadlines and completion dates
Observe training needs and relay training needs and requests to supervisor	Schedule and approve funding for team and individual training
Inform supervisor of attendance and behavioral problems	Counsel employees on behavior and initiate disciplinary actions if required
Relay requests for resources and supplies	Allocate resources to teams

## GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION

Under Part II, Team Leader positions are classified one full GS grade level (in a two-grade interval pattern) above the highest grade level of GS-9 or higher (nonsupervisory and nonleader) work led which is carried out for 25% or more of the time by team members. For example, leading a base level of GS-11 work would result in a grade level of GS-12 for the Team Leader's

position; or, leading a base level of GS-9 or GS-10 positions would yield a grade level of GS-11 for the Team Leader's position.

Where the work personally done by a Team Leader is materially different from the work done by the employees led, the work and the Team Leader duties are graded separately. The final grade of such a position is then determined by selecting whichever grade is higher.

### *Base Level of Work Led*

In determining the base level of work led, the grade to be used is typically the grade of the highest level of work performed within the team for which the Team Leader is fully responsible. Usually, the base level of work led will also be the level that is most representative of the work of the team led on a continuing basis. Care should be taken to ensure that the grade credited as base reflects the level of 25% or more of the work actually led.

Base level can also be viewed as that portion of the total workload which accounts for 25 percent or more of the duty hours of subordinates and others (based on estimates derived from position descriptions, supervisors, staffing studies, or contract documents) which is expended on work at or above the grade level credited.

Alternatively, where extensive contract work is present, 25 percent or more of the dollars spent on human services would be allocated for work at or above that grade level. For this purpose, include the workload of General Schedule (GS) subordinates, Federal Wage System employees in occupations and/or pay categories often associated with comparable work done by GS counterparts (e.g., Wage Grade Instrument Makers and GS Engineering Technicians, assigned military, volunteers, student trainees or non-Federal workers such as contractor employees, State and local workers, or similar non-federal personnel). In the assessment of the level of any work performed by non-GS employees, pertinent classification standards should be consulted to derive an appropriate GS equivalent, wherever possible.

In determining the highest level of work which constitutes at least 25 percent of the leader's workload or duty time, credit the work of trainee and developmental positions at the full performance level.

### *Exclude from Consideration as Base Level:*

- Any subordinate work the grade level of which is based on criteria in the GSSG (i.e., supervisory duties) or the GS Team Leader Grade Evaluation Guide, Part I or Part II;
- Work the grade level of which is based on an extraordinary degree of independence from supervision or personal accomplishment. For the purpose of applying this guide, it will be necessary to adjust the grade level of such work to whatever level is appropriate for performance under "normal" supervision. For example, if the highest graded employee receives little

or no guidance from the leader, the grade level of that employee's position may not be representative of the level of work actually led, and should not be used as the base level.

- Work for which the leader does not perform the minimum duties defined under coverage requirements in this guide for at least 25% of her/his duty time;
- FWS, military, contractor, volunteer or other non-GS work that is not susceptible to conversion to a comparable GS grade level; such work cannot be credited;
- Work performed by employees in occupations in which the leader is not sufficiently knowledgeable to carry out the minimum duties required for coverage under this guide (as may be represented by professional work in an inter-disciplinary or a matrix team). The level of such work should be used to grade the Team Leader's position only where the Team Leader has enough knowledge of the subject matter and the occupations to lead the assigned workers in accomplishing team goals and objectives. For example, this may involve working collaboratively with team members to accomplish the respective mission; working with the team to determine assignments; ensuring that necessary team and subject matter training are provided; observing quality of performance; advising and guiding team members in program matters and resolution of broad or difficult problems; and, providing constructive and timely feedback to stimulate and reinforce the team's best efforts.
- One-grade interval work below grade GS-9. Leadership of such work is assessed through application of criteria in [Part I](#) of this guide.

## TITLING INSTRUCTIONS

Positions covered by this guide are to be identified by adding the word “*Lead*” as a prefix to the authorized title of the position for which the leader is qualified and which best reflects the nature of the work being performed by the team. For example, a team leader over a team of personnel management specialists would be titled Lead Personnel Management Specialist. (**Note:** *Where the final grade of a position is based on its personal work, the position is titled and classified in accordance with guides and/or standards for the classification of nonleader work, and not as a Team Leader. Where both types of work are evaluated at the same grade level, the official title “Lead” is to be used. If desired by the agency, the parenthetical suffix “Leader” may be added to the basic title of positions graded and titled on the basis of their nonleader responsibilities.*)

## SERIES DETERMINATION

This guidance is not intended to affect current practice regarding series classification. Positions classified as to grade by means of this guide will continue to be classified to the most appropriate classification series in accordance with guidance in the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#) and [The Classifier's Handbook](#), definitions in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) [Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families](#), and amplifying material in individual OPM position classification standards and guides.